



February 2025 Government Procurement Services

This newsletter informs government purchasing and contracting professionals about public procurement topics.

Upcoming Classes:

[Procurement Management Academy](#)

(Sugar Land, TX)

[February 26-27, 2025](#)

[Writing Statements of Work](#)

(Virtual)

[March 4, 2025](#)

[Contract Administration](#)

(Virtual)

[March 6, 2025](#)

[Fundamentals of Public Purchasing](#)

(Arlington, TX)

[March 26-27, 2025](#)

Legislative Watch

Be sure to keep up with the purchasing and contracting-related bills filed this legislative session. Click on the button to find the latest status.

[Legislative Watch](#)



[More Info](#)

Why Do Contract Administration Problems Still Persist?



At least once a week, I read about a government entity that failed to administer

contracts properly. Such failures often cause delays and additional expenditures.

I often ask myself why these problems remain so prominent in government procurement. My thought is that it's likely due to several key issues:

- Poorly written contracts
- Failure to properly manage the contract
- Payments are not linked to performance

Let's look at each issue:

Training Schedule



Group Discounts Available

CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION

March 6, 2025

September 25, 2025

October 2, 2025

ESSENTIALS OF CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

May 19-20, 2025

November 5-6, 2025

ETHICS AND FRAUD IN CONTRACTING

May 6, 2025

September 17, 2025

Poorly written contracts. I don't think anyone starts out intending to write a poor contract, but it happens. Contracts are based on the advertised specifications. That is why specification writing is so important. Sadly, some people don't know how to write a "good" specification. They accept what the end-user gives them and send it out for bid with little or no improvements. Either they haven't been adequately trained, or they don't get support from management.

A purchaser must be able to ask end-users questions to obtain the necessary information about the goods or services they buy. While purchasers don't have to become "subject matter experts," they should have a sufficient understanding to ensure the resulting specification will meet the end-user's needs.

It all starts with the specification. I think of a specification as the only opportunity the vendor has to understand the entity's needs—because, most of the time, it is! The challenge in writing a good specification is providing sufficient detail to meet the entity's needs while omitting unnecessary details that unduly limit competition.

October 28, 2025

**FUNDAMENTALS OF
PUBLIC PURCHASING**

March 26-27, 2025

July 9-10, 2025

December 3-4, 2025

NEGOTIATION SKILLS

May 22, 2025

October 8, 2025

**PROCUREMENT
MANAGEMENT ACADEMY**

February 26-27, 2025

April 15, 2025

August 19-20, 2025

November 4, 2025

PURCHASING 101

FOR EVERYONE

April 9, 2025

June 10, 2025

October 15, 2025

October 23, 2025

November 13, 2025

Failure to properly manage the contract.

Contracts don't manage themselves! A good contract manager is proactive - not reactive. Several important areas for contract management include:

- Monitor vendor activity and performance.
- Identify potential problems and solutions.
- Maintain appropriate documentation.
- Conduct regular performance reviews.
- Verify the accuracy of invoices and ensure payments are consistent with contract terms.

Payments are not linked to performance.

Develop milestones and deliverables and pay the vendor only when these items are satisfactorily completed.

Most purchasers understand their responsibilities and ensure specifications are accurate and complete. We all should strive to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars.

To learn more, check out the upcoming classes.

[Writing Statements of Work](#)

SPECIFICATION WRITING

June 4, 2025

November 18, 2025

UNDERSTANDING

SMALL PURCHASES

April 24, 2025

July 23, 2025

September 30, 2025

December 5, 2025

USING REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

May 13, 2025

June 3, 2025

September 11, 2025

WRITING STATEMENTS

OF WORK

March 4, 2025

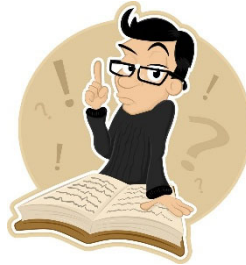
October 7, 2025

October 21, 2025

Question of the Month

Question:

" Shouldn't we accept a specification the end-user gives us? They are the subject matter experts."



Answer:

Yes, we should accept the specifications they prepare. However, purchasers must carefully review them to ensure they are complete, accurate, and appropriate. Does it include:

- Detailed specifications or statement of work.
- Start and end dates, including milestones, deliverables, and frequency of services.
- Contract monitoring method(s) to ensure compliance.

- Standards, licenses, and regulations, as appropriate.
- A payment method tied to the successful completion of deliverables.

These are just a few items to consider. Purchasing staff should add value to the procurement process. If we don't add value, why are we needed?

I want to share a story about a recent bid I received for training services. I receive bids daily, primarily for training that I don't provide. I usually delete them, but on this day, I decided to dig deeper into the bid.

Below are the entire specifications for the training:

**High/Medium Voltage Highline Training
(1 Lot)**

Date: TBD FY25

Location: (the location was specified)

What is missing? Just about everything! To name a few items:

- A detailed description of the training, including topics covered.
- Training length

- What are the minimum qualifications of the vendor and/or instructor to provide such training?
- Does the training have to meet specific OSHA requirements or other regulatory entities?
- If you don't know an exact date, then include something like "exact date to be agreed upon by both parties but must be completed by XXX." Many vendors are not aware of fiscal year dates.

I felt compelled to call the purchaser to discuss this training bid and what it was lacking. Her response was:

- "This is what the end-user gave her."
- "I don't usually buy this commodity."
- "This is the way I was trained."
- "I don't have time to research because I have other work."

So when I say "yes," accept what the end-user provides, but realize that the purchaser must also ensure that the specification is complete and accurate before it is sent to the vendors!

Government Procurement Services

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